

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY VIENNA

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (MISNUMBERED PARAGRAPHS)

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: SHUM, AU

SUBJECT: 1978 COUNTRY REPORTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES

1. PURSUANT TO PROSPECTIVE SUBMISSION BY THE DEPARTMENT TO THE CONGRESS OF COUNTRY REPORTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES, EMBASSY IS REQUESTED TO REASSESS LAST YEAR'S SUBMISSION, TEXT OF WHICH FOLLOWS.

2. THE HUMAN RIGHTS REPORTS ARE REQUIRED BY THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT, ARE UNCLASSIFIED, AND SHOULD NOT BE CONFUSED WITH LAST YEAR'S CLASSIFIED COUNTRY EVALUATION PLANS.

3. EMBASSY REQUESTED TO CABLE RECOMMENDED CHANGES AND ADDITIONS TO REPORT BY SEPTEMBER 20.

4. BEGIN TEXT:" AUSTRIA, A NEUTRAL AND WESTERN ORIENTED
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SOCIETY, ATTACHES VITAL IMPORTANCE TO HUMAN RIGHTS. IT IS A PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACY. THE AUSTRIAN CONSTITUTION AND AUSTRIAN STATE TREATY OF 1955 DEFINE AND GUARANTEE BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNING THE INTEGRITY OF THE PERSON AND CIVIL AND POLITICAL LIBERTIES. AUSTRIA'S RECORD SINCE REGAINING SOVEREIGNTY IN 1955 HAS BEEN EXEMPLARY. AUSTRIA IS WELL KNOWN FOR ITS ASSISTANCE TO

REFUGEES FROM OTHER COUNTRIES, MANY OF WHOM HAVE SETTLED THERE, AND FOR ITS IMPORTANT ROLE IN FACILITATING TRANSIT OF JEWISH EMIGRANTS FROM THE SOVIET UNION.

5. RESPECT FOR THE INTEGRITY OF THE PERSON, INCLUDING FREEDOM FROM:

A. TORTURE

FREEDOM FROM TORTURE IS GUARANTEED BY LAW AND RESPECTED IN PRACTICE.

B. CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT.

FREEDOM FROM CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT IS GUARANTEED BY LAW AND RESPECTED IN PRACTICE.

C. ARBITRARY ARREST OR IMPRISONMENT

FREEDOM FROM ARBITRARY ARREST OR IMPRISONMENT IS GUARANTEED BY LAW AND RESPECTED IN PRACTICE.

D. DENIAL OF FAIR PUBLIC TRIAL

FAIR PUBLIC TRIAL IS GUARANTEED BY LAW AND RESPECTED IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PRACTICE.

E. INVASION OF THE HOME

FREEDOM FROM INVASION OF THE HOME IS GUARANTEED BY LAW AND RESPECTED IN PRACTICE.

6. GOVERNMENTAL POLICIES RELATING TO THE FULFILLMENT OF SUCH VITAL NEEDS AS FOOD, SHELTER, HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION.

AUSTRIA HAS A HIGHLY DEVELOPED SOCIAL WELFARE SYSTEM, AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH IS MORE EQUITABLE THAN IN MOST COUNTRIES. GOVERNMENT, LABOR AND MANAGEMENT COOPERATE WELL IN A SO-CALLED "SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP" WHICH HAS BEEN EFFECTIVE IN AVOIDING SERIOUS LABOR-MANAGEMENT DISPUTES. AUSTRIA'S SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT PLACES HEAVY EMPHASIS ON MAINTAINING AND IMPROVING HEALTH, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES.

THE AUSTRIAN STATE TREATY (ARTICLE 7) STATES THAT SLOVENE AND CROATIAN MINORITIES SHALL ENJOY THE SAME RIGHTS ON

EQUAL TERMS AS ALL OTHER AUSTRIAN NATIONALS AND INTER ALIA

GRANTS TO THEM THE RIGHT TO EDUCATIONAL INSTRUCTION IN THEIR OWN LANGUAGES AT THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LEVEL AND TO A PROPORTIONATE NUMBER OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS. INTERPRETATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THESE RIGHTS HAS BEEN A SUBJECT OF CONTROVERSY. THE AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT HAS RECENTLY ENACTED AND STARTED TO IMPLEMENT LEGISLATION WHICH IT HOPES WILL FULFILL AUSTRIA'S OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE STATE TREATY.

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7. RESPECT FOR CIVIL AND POLITICAL LIBERTIES, INCLUDING:

A. FREEDOM OF THOUGHT, SPEECH, PRESS, RELIGION AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ASSEMBLY.

THESE FREEDOMS ARE IN FULL EFFECT.

B. FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT WITHIN THE COUNTRY, FOREIGN TRAVEL AND EMIGRATION

THERE IS COMPLETE FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT WITHIN AND FROM THE COUNTRY.

C. FREEDOM TO PARTICIPATE IN POLITICAL PROCESS.
THIS FREEDOM IS IN EFFECT.

8. GOVERNMENT ATTITUDE AND RECORD REGARDING INTERNATIONAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

THERE HAVE BEEN NO INVESTIGATIONS OF AUSTRIA'S HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD. TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, THERE HAVE BEEN NO REQUESTS FOR THEM.END QUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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